

ATTENTION: ALL PERSONS WHOSE NATURALIZATION APPLICATIONS WERE DENIED BY THE SEATTLE, SPOKANE OR YAKIMA IMMIGRATION SERVICE AFTER MAY 4, 1998

Chief Judge Robert Lasnik of the United States District Court in Seattle is considering a proposed settlement of a lawsuit against the Immigration Service by a class of denied citizenship applicants. The applicants alleged that the Immigration Service did not make proper determinations of whether they had good moral character for the three or five year period prior to their applications. The court must determine whether the settlement is fair and reasonable.

If you are a class member, you may object to the settlement not later than January 9, 2006, for consideration by the court at a later hearing.

Who is a class member? Class members are applicants for citizenship whose applications have been denied by the Seattle, Yakima or Spokane Immigration Service on or after May 4, 1998 and before court approval of the settlement, and where the denial was based on lack of good moral character. There are two exceptions: applicants who were later granted citizenship, and applicants who are statutorily barred from citizenship. The most common reason that applicants are statutorily barred is because of a conviction for a serious crime. The complete list of statutory bars is found in the statute at 8 U.S.C. §1101(f).

What does the settlement provide? The settlement requires reopening of denied applications and a new decision based on correct legal standards. Applicants will have the opportunity to submit additional evidence of good moral character. The Immigration Service will make a final decision by balancing positive and negative factors, and provide a written decision stating the basis for the decision.

After the settlement is approved, the Immigration Service will have a period of time to review its files to identify and notify class members. The Immigration Service will notify many class members by mail about the reopening procedure. It is possible that some will not get a notice, so any person who believes they are a class member may submit a new N-400 without fee to the special mailing address that Immigration will use for this purpose. Class members will have 12 months after notice to submit a new, no-fee application for naturalization, and have it properly decided. The

settlement also provides for the payment of plaintiffs' attorneys fees and costs.

The Immigration Service may release information regarding an applicant's current address, A number and other identifying information to class counsel for purposes of identifying and notifying class members and monitoring compliance with the reopening procedure. The information will be protected from further disclosure pursuant to the terms of a court order.

You may obtain a complete copy of the proposed Settlement Agreement from counsel for Plaintiffs' Class, Gibbs Houston Pauw, 1000 Second Avenue, Suite 1600, Seattle, WA 98104; 206-682-1080; www.ghp-law.net, or from the Immigration Service webpage at <http://uscis.gov/graphics/lawsregs/settlement.htm>

What do I do if I object to the proposed settlement? Send your written objection to the addresses below. State your full name, address and phone number, alien number, and the date your citizenship application was denied by the Seattle, Yakima or Spokane Immigration Service. ***Your objection must be received by the court and counsel not later than January 9, 2006.***

Addresses for filing objections: You must send any objections in writing ***to all three*** of the following:

Clerk
United States District Court
700 Stewart St.
Seattle, WA 98104,
attn: Lee v. Gonzales No. C04-449RSL.

Kristin Johnson
Office of the United States Attorney
700 Stewart
Seattle, WA 98104
attn: Lee v. Gonzales No. C04-449RSL

Gibbs Houston Pauw
1000 Second Ave. Suite 1600
Seattle, WA 98104

attn: Lee v. Gonzales No. C04-449RSL